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## **Perceived Ethical Leadership and Its Influence to Teachers' Trust in School**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Ethical leadership is seen as key to the survival of an organization and trust is viewed as a significant factor to establish reliance and cooperation. This quantitative descriptive-correlational study described and examined the relationship between the teachers' perceived ethical leadership and teachers' trust in schools. Proportionate stratified random sampling was used to the target population size of 161 teachers (elementary and secondary) from four different schools under District IV of the Division of Malaybalay City for S.Y. 2020-2021. Descriptive statistics, MANOVA with discriminant analysis and post-hoc test, and bivariate correlations were utilized for the data analysis. Results revealed that, in general, teachers perceived their school leaders as a moral person and moral manager with high ethical beliefs and values. Likewise, the overall teachers' trust in their principals, colleagues, and clients is moderately high. It can be inferred that ethical leadership is manifested and perceived differently among the schools and the group differences can be mutually explained by moral person and moral manager. Also, teacher's level of trust varies among schools, and the univariate analysis result showed that only trust in principals revealed a statistical difference among the three subscales of trust in schools. In contrast, teachers' length of service does not affect their perception on the ethical leadership and trust in schools. Lastly, there is a moderate positive magnitude of correlation between the general perceived ethical leadership and teachers' trust in schools. It is recommended for school on occasion to conduct seminars related to ethical leadership and how it could help build trust in a school organization.*

**Keywords:** education, ethical leadership, teachers' trust in school, quantitative correlational study, Philippines

### **INTRODUCTION**

Ethical leadership is viewed as an attribute of good management and supervision in an organization. Ethical leaders tend to exhibit acceptable social behavior in dealing with employees. It is demonstrated as a personal enactment in intersubjective relationships between the leader and the subordinates. As mentioned by Khan and Javed (2018), ethical leadership is about having the personal characteristics, behaviors, decision making attitudes that are centered on morality and moral management of others in an organization. It is "the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement and decision- making".

Ethical leaders are characterized as honest, caring, and principled individuals who make fair and balanced decisions (Brown, Treviño, and Harrison 2005). They treat their followers with respect, keep promises, allow employees to have input in decisions and clarify expectations and responsibilities (Kalshoven, Den Hartog, and De Hoogh, 2011). Since ethical leadership is leadership that is directed by respect for ethical beliefs and values, and for the dignity and rights for others, it is thus, related to concepts such as honesty, consideration, charisma, fairness and trust (Brown et al., 2005). In the educational context, the challenge for the school leaders is to recognize which leadership behaviors have the greatest impact on each teacher's perception of trust and responding appropriately (MacNeil and Blake, 1998).

Khan and Javed (2014) underscored that ethical leadership is the key to the survival of an organization. In an educational organization, the school leaders are bound to model strong moral character traits to inculcate good values among the teachers and learners. Thus, the school leaders as well as the teachers are expected to display the highest ethical values to bring desirable changes in the behavior of the students. Hence, organizations must be aware on the different ethical leadership styles that would help create a rapport and trustful environment for their employees. A school is an institutional organization where trust is an essential factor to establish reliance and cooperation. Trust is a complex emotion: an interaction that one person may perceive as trustworthy, another person may not. Trust is an individual's or group's willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that the latter party is benevolent, reliable, competent, honest and open (Caudle, 2019; Covey, 2006).

However, although Balyer (2017) recognized trust as one of the essential elements at schools, after conducting a qualitative study on teachers trust in school leaders, it was discovered that teachers in their study do not trust their school leaders in general. It was recommended that a more careful way should be considered in choosing and appointing school leaders in their post. It was because teachers have more trust in principals who respect and motivate them, encourage participation in school-related decisions and self-development, model for desired and appropriate behaviors, and manage the organizations' resources fairly and skillfully. As found by Handford and Leithwood (2013), competence, consistency and reliability, openness, respect, and integrity are mostly what influenced teachers trust in principals. Hence, a leader is more trusted by their followers if they displayed appropriate ethical leader behavior (Heres, Lasthuizen, and Six, 2009). Thus, one of the most challenging tasks for leaders is to cultivate high trust school environments (Tschannen-Moran and Gareis, 2015).

Handford and Leithwood (2013) recommended that follow-up research should be undertaken for a deeper exploration on leaders' trust building practices with different samples of teachers in different contexts. This motivates the researcher to conduct a quantitative examination of the relationship of the ethical leadership and teachers trust in schools. The above-mentioned studies provided insights and established key ideas and concepts of the significance of ethical leadership in an organization that directly and indirectly suggesting that the perceived ethical leadership can lead to the cultivation of trust between the school leaders and teachers. Hence, this study had determined the level of teachers perceived ethical leadership and trust in school. Also, this research had determined the significant difference of the variables involved based in the length of service and among schools. Lastly, this study explored the relationship between the perceived ethical leadership and teacher's trust in school.

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## METHODS

The study adapted a descriptive-correlational design to describe and investigate the nature of relationship of teachers perceived ethical leadership and trust in school without manipulation. Proportionate stratified random sampling was used to target population size of the teachers from four different schools under district 4 of the Division of Malaybalay City for S.Y. 2020-2021. Data coding was employed for confidentiality. The sampling that was used ensures the presence of the key subgroups within the sample or within the population (Maheshwari, 2017). Any participant who had a missing data was excluded, which made up to 31 participants. From the initial data set of 161, 130 participants remained (81%). The range in years of service (YOS) is from 1-40 ( $M_{YOS} = 14.13, SD = 10.74$ ). With regards to gender,

males made up 6% of the sample while 96% were identified as female.

### Measures

The study questionnaire was divided into three parts. The letter of intent, the brief profile of the teachers which includes, name (optional), gender, age, teacher position, teacher designation and years of service; questionnaire for ethical leadership and questionnaire for trust. Questionnaire for Ethical Leadership was adapted from (Khan & Javed, 2018). The Ethical Leadership Scale-Revised (ELS-R) is a 17-item scale that measures ethical leadership and found to have a Cronbach's coefficient alphas of 0.93. The extent of teacher's answer in ELS-R for every statement was expressed in a 6-point scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Moreover, the Trust Questionnaire for Teachers trust in schools was adapted from Hoy & Moran (2003). The 26 item Omnibus Trust Scale (OTS) measures the teacher's Trust in principals, colleagues and clients. The Cronbach's coefficient alphas for trust in principal is 0.98, trust in colleagues is 0.93 and trust in clients is 0.94. The extent of teachers answer in OTS for every statement was expressed in a 6-point scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

### Data Gathering Procedure

A letter for approval to conduct this study was sent to the schools' division superintendent. After the approval, letters of intent were sent out to the respective principals under district four (4) of the division of Malaybalay City informing them of the conduct of the study. This was followed by the distribution of the researcher's questionnaire in the target schools. A letter of consent was also distributed along with the questionnaires and were scheduled to be collected after a week. Since this study was conducted during the pandemic, there were instances wherein the researcher has to return to the schools after the one-week period to retrieve the remaining unanswered questionnaires due to the limited availability of the respondents. The questionnaires were subjected to disinfection and were left to stand for at least 5 days as the minimum health protocols were followed after the retrieval. Then, the questionnaires were sorted and examined. Before the data analysis, data screening was employed and those with missing values were not included.

### Statistical Treatment

In order to describe the level of perceived ethical leadership and teacher's trust in schools, descriptive statistics using mean and standard deviation were used. Moreover, to determine the significant differences in the perceived ethical leadership and teacher's trust in schools

based on length of service and among schools in the District IV, One-Way Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) with discriminant analysis and post-hoc test was utilized. Furthermore, statistical measure using Person r product-moment correlation was utilized to quantify strength as well as the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To describe teachers' general perception on ethical leadership, mean and standard deviation were utilized and presented in Table 1. In terms of Ethical Leadership as a moral person, the statement, "When making decisions, asks 'what is the right thing to do?'" had the highest mean score of 4.68. Perhaps, the teachers would like their school leaders to solicit ideas from them before arriving at a decision. On the other hand, the statement "Cannot be Trusted" had the lowest mean score of 2.70. Probably, the teachers find their leaders as trustworthy. In terms of ethical leadership as a moral manager, the statement, "Acknowledge ethically valued behavior of employees" had a mean score of 4.74. This may be a manifestation that teachers would appreciate if their school leaders recognized their ethical behavior. It could be that they would like their school leaders to give importance to employees' honesty, fairness and equity at work.

The overall mean score of teacher's general perception on ethical leadership was 4.34 with standard deviation of .746 which indicates that teachers think their school leaders have high ethical beliefs and values. They see their them as highly ethical persons who exhibited moral behaviors and were moral managers. The results of the analysis are similar to the research findings of Akker et al. (2009) on ethical leadership of the respondents' manager. According to the results of their study, substantial number of respondents stated that their managers demonstrated morality on both private and professional level. However, more than have of them perceived that moral person aspect of ethical leadership does not involve private conduct of the leader but rather constrained to the leader being a moral person insofar as it is related to the position and the context of the organization. Another notable result that conforms in this study was the importance of balancing reward and punishment behaviors of the members of the organization which they see as part of an ethical leader. A large majority of the respondents in their study had observed that their leaders impose punishment to members whose acts deviates from organizational values.

Table 1. Mean and Standard deviation of Teachers' General Perception on Ethical Leadership

Sub-scale	Mean	SD	Description
Moral Person	4.32	0.579	High
Moral Manager	4.36	0.332	High
Overall Mean	4.34	0.746	High

Legend:

Responses	Scale	Descriptive Rating
Strongly Agree	5.10-6.00	Very High
Moderately Agree	4.21-5.00	High
Slightly Agree	3.41-4.20	Moderately High
Slightly Disagree	2.61-3.40	Moderately Low
Moderately Disagree	1.81-2.60	Low
Strongly Disagree	1.00-1.80	Very Low



To describe teachers' general trust in schools, mean and standard deviation was also employed and presented in Table 2. In terms of faculty trust in principal, the statement, "Teachers in this school trust the principal" had the highest mean score of 4.60. This shows that teachers place their trust in their principal. It could be that their principal displayed behaviors and actions worthy of trust. On the other hand, in the statement, "The Principal of this school does not show concern for teachers" had the lowest mean score of 2.92. This may be because their school principal, on the contrary, does show concern for teachers. This might be apparent in the way their leaders deal or take interest with the teachers about certain things. In terms of faculty trust in colleagues, the statement, "Teachers in this school do their jobs well" had the highest mean score of 5.25. This establishes that teachers believe their co-teachers were responsible enough to perform the work assigned to them and that they are good at what they do. Also, in the statement, "Even in difficult times, teachers in this school can depend on each other" had second highest mean score of 5.10. This shows that teachers rely and find comfort in each other during challenging periods. This is also evident in the statement, "teachers in this school are suspicious of each other" which had the lowest mean score of 2.60. It appears that teachers see their co-workers as trustworthy people and they were not suspicious of them.

In terms of faculty trust in clients, the statement, "Teachers here believe that students are competent learners" had the highest mean score of 4.68. This high rating indicates that teachers believe in their students' capability and ability to learn and that they will be able to do something well enough to meet the teacher's standard. Furthermore, this is supported by the statement, "Students in this school can be counted on to do their work" which has the second highest mean score of 4.46. This shows that teachers think their students can be trusted with assigned tasks and bring about expected outcomes. The overall mean score of teachers' general trust in school is 4.18 with standard deviation of .360 which means that teachers have moderately high reliance on the integrity of the school.

The result of this study is consistent with the study of Handford, & Leithwood (2013) who found out that the leadership practices which teachers interpret as indicators of competence, consistency and reliability, openness, respect, and integrity are mostly what influenced teachers trust in principals. However, the result is contrary to the study of Balyer (2017) who found out that teachers' perceptions on their trust towards their principals as school leaders is negative. Hence, the lack of trust in the school principals as leaders stems from teachers' experiences and observation. The teachers in their study do not consider their principals as leaders who have the intellectual capacity and charisma to perform its duty like leading, develop academic standards, inspire the followers, set the vision, and translates school mission to staff and students. Likewise, this result is similar to the study of Goddard et al. (2001) whose findings suggest that teacher trust in students and parents makes schools better learning places for students, and could enable and empower fruitful links between families and schools. It appears that trust has a collective effect, hence in schools where there was a greater trust, students' achievement was generally higher.

Table 2. Mean and Standard deviation of Teachers' General Trust in School

Statements	Mean	SD	Description
Faculty Trust in Principal	3.93	0.685	Moderately High
Faculty Trust in Colleagues	4.52	0.832	High
Faculty Trust in Clients	4.17	0.409	Moderately High

Overall Mean	4.18	0.360	Moderately High
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Legend:

	Responses	Scale	Descriptive Rating
One-way	Strongly Agree	5.10-6.00	Very High
	Moderately Agree	4.21-5.00	High
	Slightly Agree	3.41-4.20	Moderately High
	Slightly Disagree	2.61-3.40	Moderately Low
	Moderately Disagree	1.81-2.60	Low
	Strongly Disagree	1.00-1.80	Very Low

MANOVA was conducted to determine whether ethical leadership subscales (Moral Person and Moral Manager) were different among schools. An alpha level of **0.05** was utilized. Descriptive statistics for the different variables across schools are in Table 3. Assumptions for normality ( $W > .01$ ) were met and homogeneity of covariances (Box's  $M = 21.44, p = .016$ ) greater at alpha level of **0.01** (French et al., 2008). A statistically significant effect was identified between the schools and two dependent variables, Pillai's Trace  $V = .332, F(6, 252), p < 0.01$ . Approximately 16.6% of the variance in the model was accounted for in the combined dependent variables across schools, yielding a strong effect. Separate univariate ANOVAs on the dependent variables revealed a statistically significant difference among the schools,  $F(3, 126) = 17.03, p < 0.01$  for moral person and  $F(3, 126) = 17.87, p < 0.01$  for moral manager. A large effect size was noted,  $\eta^2 = .29$  and  $\eta^2 = .30$  respectively, indicative of a strong practical significance.

Table 3. Mean and Standard Deviation of Ethical Leadership Across Schools

Dependent Variable	School	Mean	SD	N
Moral Person	School A	5.02	.495	20
	School B	4.27	.660	79
	School C	5.28	.496	13
	School D	4.74	.430	18
Moral Manager	School A	4.68	.528	20
	School B	4.17	.468	79
	School C	5.03	.276	13
	School D	4.51	.424	18

From the multivariate results above indicates that teachers' perception on ethical leadership differed among schools. This is probably because the leaders of each school were also different in terms of their background, leadership skills, behavior towards work, towards subordinates and clients. This effect is not directly explained by multivariate test statistic as to clearly identify which among the schools cause this difference, thus, the univariate test was examined. The univariate result suggests there was a variation on moral person and moral manager, subscales of ethical leadership, among schools. Looking at the means among the schools on moral person presented in Table 3, school C has highest mean score of 5.28 indicating that the teachers see their school leaders as a very highly ethical person. This implies that there are certain characteristics of their school leaders that are unique which may

be the reason for their teachers to see them as moral persons displaying ethical behaviors or otherwise see them as not. The lowest mean score of 4.27 can be observed in school B among the schools. This result suggests that there are some aspects of the leader that do not conform to the ideal moral leader of the teacher in the school.

For moral manager, still school C obtained the highest mean score of 5.03 among the schools. This suggests that their school leader acknowledge ethics as an important aspect of their leadership agenda and for them to impart these to their employees, they must make the ethical dimension of their leadership explicit and salient. However, among schools, school B has a mean score of 4.17 which reveals that the teachers find it quite challenging to view their leader possessing the character of a moral manager. Therefore, it can be inferred from the variation of the scores among the school that ethical leadership is manifested and perceived differently. These variations may be attributed to the teacher's different experiences and observations on their school leaders' character and management in the school affairs.

A post hoc discriminant analysis was conducted to determine how the school's differences were manifested across the dependent variables. The first discriminant function was significant, Wilks'  $\lambda = .672, \chi^2(6) = 50.05, p < 0.01$ . Approximately 97.2% of the variance, canonical  $R^2 = .32$ , in the model was accounted for in the first discriminant function for moral person and moral manager across schools. Moral manager loaded moderately ( $r = .58$ ) and had a strong relationship ( $\beta = .95$ ) to the first function, presented in table 4. The second discriminant function was not significant, Wilks'  $\lambda = .987, \chi^2(2) = 1.658, p = .437$ . Approximately 2.8% of the variance, canonical  $R^2 = .10$ , in the model was accounted for in the second discriminant function for moral manager and person across schools. Centroid means for the discriminant function indicated that school C (1.41) had the most effect on ethical leadership, followed by school A (.76), school D (.32) and school B (-.50).

Table 4. Correlation Coefficients and Standardized Function Coefficients of Ethical Leadership

Variable	Correlation Coefficients with Discriminant Function	Standardized Function Coefficients
Moral Person	.929	0.481
Moral Manager	.952	0.582

The data in Table 4 shows the relative contribution of each of the dependent variables to the differences of ethical leadership among schools. The standardized discriminant function coefficient of moral person ( $r = .48$ ) and moral manager ( $r = .58$ ) would indicate that both subscales have nearly equal moderate influence in discriminating the groups. This means that for a school leader to be perceived as an ethical leader, the leader must portray the characters of both a moral person and a moral manager. It can be observed that moral person and moral manager have strong loadings,  $\beta = .93$  and  $\beta = .95$  respectively, to the first function. Thus, the group differences were explained by both the subscales of ethical leadership.

Likewise, One-way MANOVA was conducted to determine whether ethical leadership subscales (Moral Person and Moral Manager) were different among teachers based on length of service. Using Pillai's Trace, there was a non-significant effect of length of service on the

dependent variables,  $V = .075, F(12, 246) = .803, p = 0.647$ . Separate ANOVAs on the dependent variables revealed non-significant effects of length of service on moral person  $F(6, 123) = .077, p = 0.998$  and moral manager  $F(6, 123) = .444, p = 0.848$ . This reveals that the length of service of teachers does not affect their perception on ethical leadership.

Comparable results of this study can be observed in Eranil (2017) findings which suggest variations of teachers' perceptions to the level of ethical behaviors of school leaders. It was found out that the school leaders in their study are to somehow do not possessed the values or display behaviors portraying an ethical leader from the views of the teachers. Also, the ethical leadership behaviors of the school leaders did not show a significant difference in teachers' seniority, age and years working with them. Contradicting to this, results in the study of Katranci et al. (2015) showed that from the lens of the teacher, school leaders had exhibited leadership behaviors in their own schools while demographic characteristic such as institutional service period had significant effect on the teachers' perceptions regarding school leaders' ethical leadership behaviors. Hence, the longer the tenure of the employees the more ethical they will perceive the behavior of leader (Khan, Bauman, & Javed, 2020).

On the other hand, One-way MANOVA was conducted to determine whether trust in school (Principal, Colleagues and Clients) is different among schools. An alpha level of **0.05** was utilized. Descriptive statistics for the different variables across schools are in Table 5. Assumptions for normality ( $W > 0.01$ ) were met and homogeneity of covariances (Box's  $M = 34.30, p = .024$ ) greater at alpha level of **0.01** (French et al., 2008). A statistically significant effect was identified between the schools and three dependent variables, Pillai's Trace  $V = .149, F(9, 378), p = 0.022$ . Approximately 5% of the variance in the model was accounted for in the combined dependent variables across schools, yielding a small effect. Separate univariate ANOVAs on the dependent variables revealed a statistically significant difference among the schools on principal only,  $F(3, 126) = 6.338, p < 0.01$  with  $\eta^2 = .13$  indicating medium effect size while non-significant difference on colleagues  $F(3, 126) = .728, p = 0.537$  and clients  $F(3, 126) = 858, p = .868$  with  $\eta^2 = .02$  and  $\eta^2 = .01$ , respectively, indicative of small effect size.

Table 5. Mean and Standard Deviation of Trust in School Across Schools

Dependent Variable	School	Mean	SD	N
Trust in Principal	School A	4.10	.456	20
	School B	3.84	.489	79
	School C	4.25	.296	13
	School D	4.28	.562	18
Trust in Colleagues	School A	4.48	.338	20
	School B	4.52	.532	79
	School C	4.72	.376	13
	School D	4.56	.556	18
Trust in Clients	School A	4.19	.443	20
	School B	4.16	.428	79
	School C	4.27	.430	13
	School D	4.19	.441	18



From the multivariate result, teacher's level of trust varies among schools. This is likely due to the teacher's different experiences with their respective schools. The univariate result shows that among the three subscales of trust in schools, only trust in principal reveal a statistical difference. Looking at the means among the schools on trust in principal presented in Table 5, school D has the highest mean score of 4.28 indicating that the teachers see their principal as a very trustworthy person. This suggests that their leader does what is expected from a principal. The lowest mean score of 3.84 was observed in school B among schools. This result implies that there are some regards of the leaders that do not fit to the ideal trustable leader of the school.

To determine what group(s) are statistically significantly different from the other on trust in principal, a post hoc Games-Howel Analysis was employed. Statistically significant differences were noted between school B and school C only, since alpha level is set at **0.01** to reduced the chance of committing type 1 error. Large effect size between school B and school C can be observed,  $g = .88$ . Practical significance was assessed using Hedges'  $g$  since groups have different sample sizes (Enzmann, 2015). However, school B and school D was statistically significant if alpha is at **0.05** level, presented in Table 6. The results suggest that between school B and school C, teachers' trust towards their principal's were distinct. It might be that this is due to that principal's behavior and their efforts in maintaining a healthy relationship among teachers.

Table 6. Games-Howell Post Hoc Analysis on Trust in Principal Across Schools

Group Comparisons		Mean Difference	p	$g$
School B	School A	-.25	.146	.54
	School C	-.41*	.002*	.88
	School D	-.44*	.025	.88

\*Significant difference at  $\alpha = 0.01$

Furthermore, One-way MANOVA was conducted to determine whether trust in school (Principal, Colleagues and Clients) was different among teachers based on length of service. Using Pillai's Trace, there was a non-significant effect of length of service on the dependent variables,  $V = .176, F(18, 369) = 1.278, p = 0.199$ . Separate ANOVAs on the dependent variables revealed non-significant effects of length of service on trust in principal  $F(6, 123) = 1.628, p = 0.145$ , trust in colleagues  $F(6, 123) = .836, p = .544$  and trust in clients  $F(6, 123) = .565, p = .758$ . This reveals that the length of service of teachers does not affect their trust in schools.

To determine the relationship between ethical leadership and teachers trust in schools, a series of Person r product moment correlation was employed and presented in Table 7.

**Table 7.** Summary of the Relationship Between Perceived Ethical Leadership and Teachers Trust in School

Variables	Trust in Principal		Trust in Colleagues		Trust in Clients		Trust in School	
	Pearson r	p-values	Pearson r	p-values	Pearson r	p-values	Pearson r	p-values
Moral Person	.552*	.000	.217*	.010	.065	.447	.372*	.000

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Moral Manager	.494*	.000	.219*	.009	.086	.308	.356*	.000
Ethical Leadership	.640*	.000	.256*	.002	.094	.269	.442*	.000

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\*Correlation is significant at  $\alpha = 0.05$

The data in Table 7 shows the correlation between the ethical leadership with its two sub-scales and teachers trust in school with its three components across schools. The degree of relationship was tested at an alpha of 0.05 level of significance. The results shown in the table above exhibited that the correlation between two sub-scales (moral person and moral manager) of ethical leadership and two components (trust in principal and trust in colleagues) of teachers trust in school obtained p-values less 0.05 except on trust in clients. Consequently, since the p-values are less than 0.05 alpha level, therefore there is a positive significant relationship between two sub-scales (moral person and moral manager) of ethical leadership and two components (trust in principal and trust in colleagues). Additionally, this means that there is a moderate to strong magnitude of correlation between the mentioned domains except on trust in clients.

On sub-levels of both the scales, being a moral person is somewhat more closely related to teachers trust in school compared to being a moral manager. A relatively large effect size,  $r^2 = .30$  and .24 respectively, can be noted between moral person and moral manager, and trust in principal (Gignac & Szodorai, 2016). From the effect size result, 30% of the variance in trust in school can be explained by moral person while 24% of the variance in trust in school can be predicted by moral manager. From these results, it is implied that across the schools, the level of trust that teachers put on their leaders depend on principal's individual traits like characterizing honesty and integrity which show a moral person. Similarly, trust from teachers is established if their leaders as a moral manager lead by example, exemplify fairness, encourage respects among constituents and decision-making is value driven. Hence, teachers across schools might have witnessed their leaders characterized the said qualities which perhaps explained the occurrence of moderate linear relationship.

Likewise, being moral person and moral manager is to some extent associated with teachers trust towards their colleagues. A typical or medium effect size,  $r^2 = .04$  and .05 respectively, can be observed between moral person and moral manager, and trust in colleagues (Gignac & Szodorai, 2016). These results would tell that 4% and 5% of the variance in trust in colleagues can be explained by moral person and moral manager. With this, the correlation result of the subscales is to somehow not adequate to tell whether moral person and moral manager can affect teachers trust in colleagues due to the low practical significance results. Thus, by some means it is not guaranteed that when leaders across the school are considered moral person and moral manager, teachers trust in their colleagues would increase. Besides, the no significance correlation between moral person and moral manager, and trust in clients would tell that there is no linear relationship exist hence variation on trust in clients might be best explained by other factors.

However, when ethical leadership as a global scale was correlated to the universal teachers trust in schools at an alpha of 0.05 level of significance, a p-value of less than 0.01 was obtained. The significant p-value signify a positive relationship between the scales. The correlation coefficients of the global scales was .442 which implies a moderate magnitude of

correlation. Thus, an increase of ethical leadership has a moderate effect to an increase of teachers trust in schools. The results would further translate that when principals among the schools exhibit ethical behavior on their leadership, teacher trust in schools were strengthen. Since the more they see that their leaders demonstrate ethical leadership, the greater is the increase of their trust towards their leaders and colleagues and probably on clients.

The effect size ( $r^2$ ) of the relationship between the global scales in this study was .19. This indicates that 19% of the variance in teacher trust in schools can be predicted by ethical leadership. Across the schools, teachers might have felt or observed that their leaders were serious in taking their responsibility, keep promises, caring and emphatic, treat people with genuine affection, and can tolerate and understand that contradiction is part of a creative growth as an organization. Among all the relationship presented, ethical leadership is highly correlated with trust in principal. A large effect size,  $r^2 = .40$ , can be noted which implies that 40% of the variance in trust in principal can be explained by ethical leadership. Thus, the positive relationship would indicate that if principals demonstrate ethical values as leaders, then teachers will have more confidence to put their trust on them.

The correlation result is parallel to the study of Tschannen-Moran & Gareis (2015) who purported that school leader's values, attitudes, and behaviors has significant influence on the culture of a school and it is the principal's responsibility to nurture, build and sustain trusting relationships within the schools. Furthermore, results of this quantitative study can be supported by Balyer (2017) who concluded that principals who motivate teachers, encourage participations and make them feel that they are respected tend to trust their leaders. Hence, principals should foster collective vision, model desired and appropriate behaviors, coach faculty to empower their skills, and mediate conflicts that may arise in the school.

Congruent results in this study can be observed on Akker et al. (2009) who suggest that the perceptions of the followers on what is an ethical leader plays a significant role in establishing a more trusted relationship between leaders and followers. Their study findings suggest that the congruence of the desired and observed leader behavior influenced the relationship between ethical leader behaviors and trust from its constituents. Also, Brown et al. (2005) found out that ethical leadership is related to consideration behavior, honesty, trust in the leader, interactional fairness which further supports the results of this study. Hence, an ethical leader creates and establish trusting relationships among its members (Esmaelzadeh et al., 2017).

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that, in general, teachers perceived their school's leaders as a moral person and moral manager with high ethical beliefs and values. Likewise, the overall teachers' trust in their principals, colleagues and clients is moderately high. It can be inferred that ethical leadership was manifested and perceived differently among the schools and the group differences can be mutually explained by moral person and moral manager. Also, teacher's level of trust varies among schools, and the univariate analysis result showed that only trust in principals revealed a statistical difference among the three subscales of trust in schools. In contrast, teachers' length of service does not affect their perception on the ethical leadership of their school leaders and trust in schools.

Lastly, there is a moderate positive magnitude of correlation between the general perceived ethical leadership and teachers' trust in schools. Thus, an increase in teachers perceived ethical leadership has a moderate effect on the increase of teachers' trust in schools. It is recommended for school on occasion to conduct seminars related to ethical leadership and how it could help build trust in a school organization. Further exploration to a larger population, like division wide level, may be conducted for the generalizability of the findings. This research opens the scope for examinations of other leadership styles and teachers trust in schools to different population with different backgrounds and equal numbers of males and females' participants.

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